DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 308 633 EA 021 138

AUTHOR Tucker, Null A.; And Others
TITLE Board Goals Provide a District Focus.
PUB DATE Aug 88
NOTE 10p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Boards of Education; *Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; *Goal Orientation
IDENTIFIERS *Georgia (DeKalb County)

ABSTRACT

Operating a large school system somewhat resembles managing a large corporation--especially regarding goal orientation. Although educators are enjoined to provide the best possible education for youngsters, staff in large systems may be working at cross-purposes. School board members in DeKalb County, Georgia, are pursuing greater achievement gains by focusing on a few relevant goals. The board has formulated perennial and annual district goals providing focus for itself and for schools and departments. Besides plotting the board's direction, these goals facilitate budgeting and program decisions and help maintain consistency for new board members. Each goal has three parts: statement, method of achievement, and method of auditing goal achievement. Once the board decides on the goals (after input from the superintendent and constituents), district personnel decide on the appropriate methods for attaining and evaluating them. The goals are printed on posters and in a handbook, then distributed to all school system personnel, parents, and students. These persons are encouraged to channel their efforts toward accomplishing district goals. The goal achievement process is explained and illustrated by a sample perennial goal (increasing student time-on-task in the classroom). (3 references) (MLH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED308633

BOARD GOALS PROVIDE A DISTRICT FOCUS

by

Null A. Tucker, Katrena C. Howard, and Edward L. Bouie, Sr.
DeKalb County School System
Decatur, Georgia

Contributors:

Norma W. Bergman
Lyman D. Howard
Elizabeth Andrews
Phil McGregor
Donna L. Wagner
David Williamson
H. Paul Womack, Jr.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Null A. Tucker

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 021138

Tucker, Howard, Bouie

BOARD GOALS PROVIDE A DISTRICT FOCUS

Operating a large school system is similar to operating a large corporation, although the raison d'etre of each is quite different. Educators are involved to provide the best possible education for young people. Unfortunately, efforts to attain that massive task are sometimes counterproductive. Educators in a school system, especially in a large system, may be working toward different goals. In Corporate Cultures, Deal and Kennedy (1982) found that in organizations with a strong culture, "everyone knows the goals of the corporation, and they are working for them" (p.4). Consequently, school Board members in DeKalb County, Georgia, (enrollment 72,000), believe that by focusing on a few, relevant goals students will experience greater gains in achievement.

To ensure that efforts are focused on common goals, Board members have formulated district goals. The district goals provide focus for the Board as well as for schools and departments. In addition, these goals plot the direction of the Board and facilitate budgeting and program decisions. Furthermore, when new members are elected to the Board, consistency can be maintained as new members can readily see the focus of the school district.

Tucker, Howard, Bouie

DECIDING UPON AND IMPLEMENTING GOALS

The Board chairperson appoints a committee of three Board members who meet with the superintendent to determine the most prevalent needs of the school system. Using information obtained from contacts with their constituents and input from the superintendent, the committee members formulate a tentative list of goals. This list is submitted to all Board members who provide additional input and suggest priorities. All Board members agree upon the resulting goals.

The Board establishes two types of goals: perennial and annual. Perennial goals are those that are long term and may not be accomplished during one school year; whereas, annual goals are short term and may be accomplished during a school year. However, if not accomplished, an annual goal may be carried over into the following year.

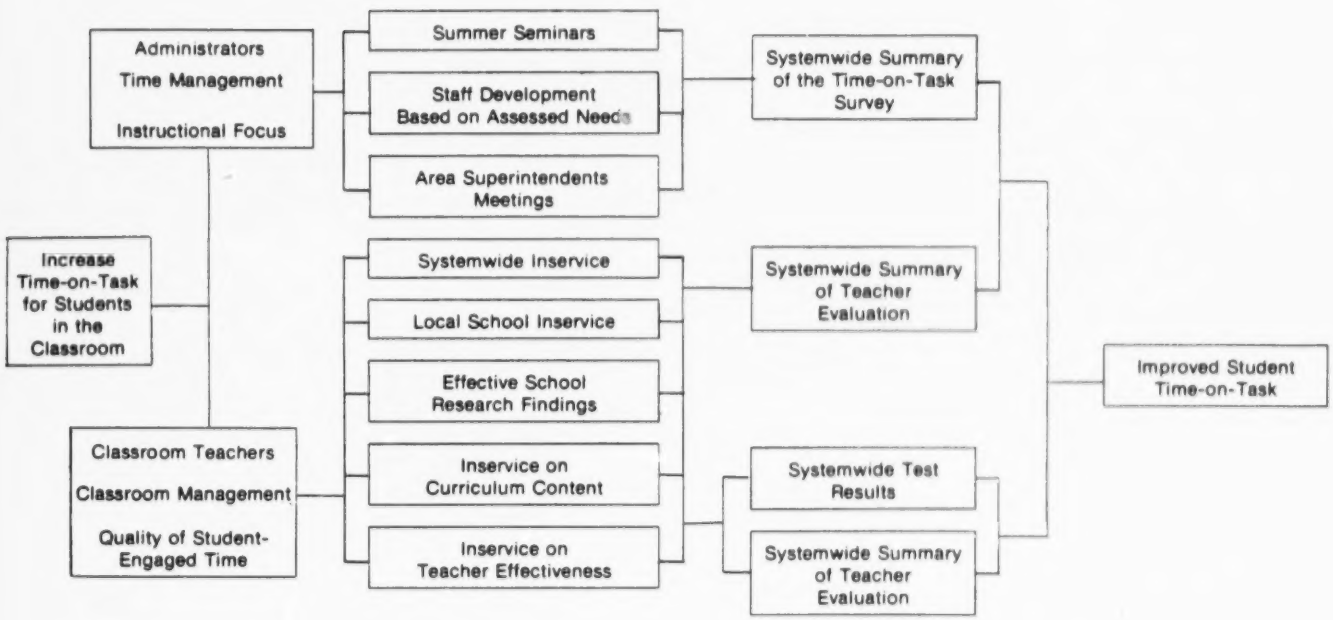
There are three parts to each goal: 1. the statement of the goal, 2. the methods of goal achievement, 3. the methods of auditing goal achievement. Once the Board decides upon the goals, district personnel decide upon parts two and three. Figure 1 provides an example of a district goal along with how it is to be achieved and audited.

[FIGURE 1 HERE]

The goals are printed on posters and in a handbook, then distributed to all school system personnel, parents, and students. These persons are encouraged to channel their efforts toward accomplishing those goals. All schools, departments, and divisions set their own goals relative to the district goals and plan how they will meet these goals. Of course, every school, division, or department cannot meet every goal; but every goal is being met by an appropriate area in the school district.

FIGURE 1

EXAMPLE OF PERENNIAL GOAL - DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM



ACHIEVING GOALS

Soon after the close of each school year, each department submits a written report detailing efforts toward implementing Board goals. In addition, a representative from each department makes a brief presentation to the Board highlighting the activities carried out during the school year to accomplish their goals and explains the results of those activities.

For example, one of the perennial Board goals is to "Increase Time-On-Task for Students in the Classroom." Research suggests a relationship between the amount of time students are actively engaged in tasks and student achievement (Carroll, 1963; Denham and Lieberman, 1980). To accomplish that goal, Research and Evaluation Department personnel designed and conducted a system-wide survey to determine teachers' perceptions of classroom distractors. Teacher responses to this survey indicated that instruction was interrupted by distractors such as forgotten or incomplete homework, writing hall passes, intercom interruptions.

Results were sent to each school principal who could analyze and interpret the results in relation to his/her particular situation. By identifying instructional time distractors, efforts could then be focused on eliminating them, thereby providing more opportunities to learn.

SUMMARY

The perennial and annual goals of the DeKalb Board of Education provide a focus not only for the district and the superintendent, but for the community. Those persons with the greatest influence on student learning -- teachers, administrators, and parents -- have input into the development of the goals. Furthermore, it is important that these persons be aware of the goals so that their energies can be channeled in the same directions. This focus helps to ensure that our purpose will be accomplished: our young people will have the best possible education.

REFERENCES

Carroll, J.B. (1963). A model of school learning. Teachers College Record, 64, 723-733.

Deal, T.E., and Kennedy, A.A. (1982). Corporate cultures, Addition-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., Reading, MA.

Denham, C. & Lieberman, S. editors, (1980). Time to learn. A review of the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study. Sacramento: California State Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing, ED 192 454.

Tucker, Howard, Bouie

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Null Tucker is Director and Katrena Howard is a research specialist in the Research & Evaluation Department; Edward Bouie is Associate Superintendent for Program Development & Staff Assessment, DeKalb School System, 955 N. Indian Creek Drive, Clarkston, Georgia 30021. Phone Number: (404) 292-6613